

cheerful that an Englishman who gazes on it
 may imagine
 himself to be in one of the most highly
 favoured parts of
 his own highly favoured country. Fields of
 wheat, wood-
 lands, meadows bright with daisies and
 clover, slope
 gently down to the edge of the Boyne/ *

Again, during the spring of 1852 Macaulay
 was writing
 an account of the plot to assassinate William
 III, which he
 relates in chapter xxi of the History. In his
 journal he
 notes: 'A cold ist of May. After breakfast I
 went to
 Turnham Green, to look at the place. I
 found it after
 some search ; the very spot beyond all doubt,
 and admir-
 ably suited for an assassination/ In the
 History he
 writes : ' The place was to be a narrow and
 winding lane
 leading from the landingplace on the north of
 the river to
 Turnham Green. The spot may still easily be
 found. The
 ground has since been drained by trenches.
 But in the
 seventeenth century it was a quagmire,
 through which the
 royal coach was with difficulty tugged at a
 foot's pace/ ²

Many historians besides Macaulay have
 visited the sites
 of the great events they narrated. Carlyle
 examined the
 fields where Frederick the Great fought his
 battles ; Mr.
 S. R. Gardiner was wont to follow on his
 bicycle the
 marches of Fairfax and Cromwell, and
 studied Drogheda
 as carefully as Macaulay did Londonderry.
 But the prac-
 tice was not as common when Macaulay wrote
 his History

as it is now. And further, Macaulay's peculiar gifts enabled him to put the results of his observations into a more picturesque form.

Perhaps the two best-known of these descriptive passages are those on the battlefield of Sedgemoor and the site of the Massacre of Glencoe.

¹Trevelyan, ii. 219-20 ; cf. History, IV, 1870 (xvi).

²Trevelyan, ii. 302 ; History, V, 2594 (xxi).